

STATE OF MICHIGAN



JOHN ENGLER, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT & BUDGET

P.O. BOX 30026, LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909

JANET E. PHIPPS, Director

December 15, 2000

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mark Conrad, National Historical Publications and Records Commission

CC: Sandra Clark, Michigan State Historical Records Advisory Board

FROM: Jim Kinsella, Records and Forms Management Division

SUBJECT: Michigan's Records Management Application Pilot Project  
Grant Number 2000-059

**Progress Report: May 1, 2000 through November 30, 2000**

The State of Michigan Records Management Application Pilot Project aims to assess the ability of a relatively new type of software program, called a Records Management Application, to classify and manage electronic records created using common desktop applications, and to implement retention requirements. An interdisciplinary team selected and installed ForeMost Enterprise 2.0, by Provenance Systems, Inc., into a Michigan government agency client-server computer environment. Currently, archivists, records managers, information technology staff and agency personnel are pilot-testing use of the software, and are evaluating its user-friendliness, its practicality, its simplicity, its effectiveness, and its impact upon various participants in the project. The Pilot Project is also assessing the practicality of employing Records Management Applications for the classification and management of electronic public records (including archival records) throughout Michigan's government enterprise; and has begun evaluating the potential for enterprise-wide implementation.

**Software Selection and Purchase**

A multi-disciplinary vendor review team (including three members of the project team) was assembled in October 1999 to select the software that would be tested during the pilot project. We issued a Request for Information and received proposals from five vendors. Four of the five products were certified by the Department of Defense to meet their Standard 5015.2. The team reviewed the proposals and invited three vendors to provide demonstrations of their product. In order to gather additional information about these products, the team contacted several existing customers of these vendors after the demonstrations. The team considered several topics to be of special concern, including the product's ability to operate in our current technology environment, the ease of participant use (especially how long would it take to file a document), and the proliferation of the product in the marketplace. After we completed our investigation, the vendor

review team unanimously selected ForeMost Enterprise 2.0 by Provenance Systems, Inc. We finalized the contract to purchase ForeMost on June 2, 2000.

### **Assembling the Project Team**

Initially, the project team consisted of Jim Kinsella, the project director; Doug Case, the electronic records analyst; and Caryn Wojcik, the electronic records archivist. We collaborated on many electronic records projects before the RMA Project; such as a pilot project for scheduling electronic records, developing a guideline for e-mail retention, and rules for imaging systems. We approached this project with enthusiasm, because we saw it as an opportunity to find a real solution with concrete results. In addition, we knew that we would not have problems working together, because we are able to contribute in ways that do not overlap.

We began advertising the two project archivist positions in October 1999 through several listservs, web sites, professional newsletters and a visit to the University of Michigan. Initially we were unable to find many qualified candidates. At that time we did interview one qualified candidate, who decided to accept another position. We re-advertised the positions in January 2000. This advertising was timed to coincide with the spring graduations of many graduate education programs. In addition to the previous advertising methods, we also called the faculty advisor to every SAA student chapter that offered coursework in electronic records. This time, we received applications from several qualified candidates. To conduct interviews, a five-member recruitment team assembled. Three candidates impressed the recruitment team; however, only one accepted our job offer. We held additional interviews to fill the second position, and eventually we selected and hired another candidate. Mimi Dionne, a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin, began working on the project on May 15, 2000, and Deborah Gouin, a graduate of Wayne State University, began working on the project on June 26, 2000.

We believe that the problems we experienced are a reflection of the current job market. Very few archivists and records managers currently seeking employment have experience with the management and preservation of electronic records. Those who do have experience, do not have trouble finding employment with Internet companies and other firms that are willing to offer substantial salaries. In comparison, a temporary position within state government apparently is not as glamorous. However, Mimi took the position and moved to Michigan because she saw it as an opportunity to gain marketable experience with electronic records. Deb had been working part-time for the State Archives before accepting this position, and was seeking a full-time professional opportunity.

The primary responsibilities of the two project archivists are to work with the participants to develop file plans, and to train them to use ForeMost. One of our concerns when we selected employees was to find people who could communicate effectively with the participants, without making them feel defensive. This is the first full-time professional position that both Mimi and Deb have had, so we were concerned that they did not have adequate experience working in an environment like ours. However, the participants are responding very positively to both Mimi and Deb. The participants indicate that both Mimi and Deb provide clear explanations, have positive attitudes, and speak to them at a level they can understand. This has contributed to the project's success so far.

## Software Installation

When the vendor review team selected ForeMost we were told that Enterprise Version 2 would be released on June 1, 2000. We believed that this release date would work well with the project since it was scheduled to begin in May. We wanted to purchase Version 2 because it contains significant technical improvements to Version 1 that make it easier to administer and deploy. By the time we finalized our contract, the release date for Version 2 was moved to June 29. We moved forward and scheduled installation and training for July. On July 10 several people from Provenance Systems, Inc. visited to conduct the official kick-off of the product installation and testing. During the remainder of that week their staff worked with the Department of Management and Budget (DMB), Information Technology Services Division (ITSD) to install ForeMost. The base product installation was successful. However, ForeMost is designed to use activators that integrate the software with other applications used by the participant (such as Microsoft Word or Novell GroupWise). These activators allow the participant to file documents directly into ForeMost's repository from the native application. None of these activators worked correctly, and Provenance promised to fix the problem in time for our mid-August training sessions.

On August 2 Provenance informed us that the problems with the activators would not be fixed in time for our training. They promised to have the problems fixed by August 30, and the project team reorganized our implementation and training calendar to accommodate the new plan. On August 31 Provenance informed us that testing and development of the activators was not going well, and they could not deliver the product as was promised. Needless to say, the project team was very disappointed and upset by this additional delay, especially since we felt that Provenance was not communicating with us sufficiently about their progress and problems. We conveyed our dissatisfaction and lack of faith directly to Provenance's CEO, and he promised prompt action. He also stated that our project was the company's number 1 priority. Once again we were forced to reorganize our training and implementation calendar.

On September 8, Provenance informed us that the problems were fixed and that we could resume the project. On September 25-28 Provenance staff uninstalled and reinstalled Version 2. However, ITSD soon discovered that the activators were causing problems with our existing software. As a result, the software could not be installed on participant computers. Nevertheless, the project team decided to have ForeMost installed in the computer lab and complete our training, because we needed to learn how to use the software.

On October 11-13 the project team attended administrator and end user training. We learned how to create user accounts, how to input file plans and retention schedules, how to assign access rights; and we learned how to file, search for and retrieve documents. However, we could not view the full functionality of the software, because the activators were not working. On October 17-18 the project team attended train-the-trainer training. Provenance staff taught us tips and techniques for teaching others to use ForeMost.

During this time, ITSD continued working with Provenance to correct the problems with the activators. By October 24 everyone believed that the problems were fixed. We installed ForeMost on four computers and began to test its functionality. At this time, the project team

discovered other problems. Some of these problems were due to the activators, and some of these problems were due to the way ForeMost functions. We believe these functional problems cause unnecessary burdens to our participants, because they increase the level of difficulty and time to file documents into the repository. Despite all of our attempts to resolve these problems, once again we were forced to postpone the implementation for our pilot participants that was scheduled for October 31.

Currently, we hope that the problems with the activators can be fixed in time for our implementation date that is scheduled for November 30. On this date, participants will be trained to use ForeMost. On December 4, ForeMost will be activated on their computers. Provenance has informed us that most of the functional problems will be fixed when a service pack is released in January 2001.

The primary concern of the project team is to provide a quality product to the pilot participants. We understand that it is common for software companies to find problems with their products and to delay release of a new product or a new version. However, these delays are extremely frustrating. We have juggled the calendars of staff and the computer lab. ITSD has some serious concerns about whether this product will work in our technology environment, especially as enhancements are made to our environment. In addition, we have had a lot of problems getting information from Provenance, and we have found that their silence is usually a sign that something is wrong.

### **A Second Pilot???**

Recently, we were pleasantly surprised to find out that the Michigan Gaming Control Board (MGCB) had purchased iRims, another RMA software product, to manage its electronic records. MGCB has asked the project team help them implement iRims in their office, by assisting with file plan development and other administrative activities. We are very pleased with this situation, because it gives us an opportunity to see how another RMA product works, without having to purchase it ourselves.

### **File Plans and Retention and Disposal Schedules**

RMA software is unique because it is the only software on the market capable of implementing the retention requirements for the records that are stored in its repository. File plans are the most essential component of a RMA. Without a file plan, users cannot file their documents into the repository. The file plan provides a classification scheme for the electronic documents, and the file plan is tied to an approved Retention and Disposal Schedule that in turn implements the retention requirements for the records.

On a more practical level, if we want our participants to use the RMA on a regular basis, their file plan must be familiar to them. If participants do not feel a sense of ownership over the file plan, they are not likely to use it. Instead, they will either refuse to file documents into the RMA entirely, or they will file their documents into the wrong place (which means the wrong retention period may be implemented). As a result, it was essential that the project team work with the participants to help them develop a file plan they can easily use. However, we were careful to

remind participants that file plans are organic entities that will change over time. As a result, we built procedures into the project that make it easy for participants to request a change to their file plan.

The pilot agency, the Office of Support Services (OSS) consists of five offices: Administration/Business Services, Records and Forms Management Division, Consolidated Print Center, Mail and Delivery/Materials Management, and Print and Graphics Services. Each of these offices needs a file plan. Participants who collaborate with other participants may have access to files within multiple file plans. All of these offices already have a Retention and Disposal Schedule for their paper records. These schedules needed to be modified to manage the electronic records that will be stored in the RMA. The project team decided that we would work with each of these offices separately to develop their file plans and update their schedules. The participants in each office will have their ForeMost account activated as these products are finished for their office. The first group of participants that will be activated includes Administration/Business Services, Records and Forms Management Division, and Consolidated Print Center. The others will follow approximately one month apart.

Several activities have been involved in the development of file plans. First, all participants attended a new class called “Organizing Electronic Files.” Organizing Electronic Files is a class that was jointly developed by the Records and Forms Management Division and the State Archives of Michigan. The class targets all state employees who use a computer to create records. It teaches basic principles of naming conventions for documents and files, establishing hierarchical filing systems, and filing and retrieval techniques. The two-hour class includes a lecture and a hands-on exercise. By taking this class, the participants were introduced to the basic concepts of filing.

Next, the participants attended a short presentation that explained what a file plan is, and what is involved in its development. After the presentation, interviews were scheduled with each participant to analyze their existing filing systems and discuss their needs for the file plan. Once everyone in an office was interviewed, a draft file plan was developed for their review and approval, along with a revised Retention and Disposal Schedule. The approved file plans and retention schedules were entered into ForeMost for Administration/Business Services, Records and Forms Management Division, and Consolidated Print Center.

## **Training and Guidelines**

The project team decided to give participants the user manual that Provenance developed for ForeMost. We are supplementing this manual with Information Sheets that contain business rules and tips for using the software.

DMB has a computer lab that we are using for training. It holds ten people. We believe that introductory training will last about 90 minutes. The “Introduction to ForeMost” class is designed to familiarize participants with three basic functions of the software: filing, searching and retrieving documents. After students take the class their ForeMost account is activated. The project team then conducts on-site visits to configure their computers and help the participants

get started. A “ForeMost Tips and Tricks” class will be offered periodically for participants who are interested in learning more advanced features of the software.

The project team is using every available method to help participants learn to use ForeMost and appreciate its features. We established a helpline that is connected to a pager that the participants can call if they have questions or problems. We also created a listserv that participants can use to communicate with each other and the project team. We began sending messages to the listserv in July to keep the participants informed about our progress. So far, the participants indicate that they appreciate receiving short updates about specific project-related issues via the listserv. In addition, we created a Microsoft Access database that we will use to track all of the questions that we receive, so we can evaluate the types of problems the participants are having. The database will contain data about questions that are received via the helpline, listserv and on-site visits.

The project team also developed several informational tools for the participants and others who are interested in learning more about the pilot project. We developed a contact card with project team member information (attached), a brochure (attached) and a web page (<http://www.state.mi.us/dmb/mgmtserv/oss/rfmd/rma/index.htm>). The project team received a lot of interest and positive feedback from archivists and records managers throughout the country via the web page. We are posting monthly progress reports on the web page, as well as other materials that we believe our colleagues may be interested in.

### **Testing RMA Features and Creating an Electronic Records Archive**

Due to the software installation problems mentioned above, the project team did not have an opportunity to test the RMA features we hoped to use by now. However, we do have a much better understanding about how a RMA implements retention requirements, and how it manages records and security.

In addition, since none of the participants are using ForeMost yet, no archival records were entered into the repository. However, Caryn Wojcik, Electronic Records Archivist, joined the archival advisory board of the San Diego Supercomputer Center’s NHPRC-funded project. We unofficially agreed to supply the San Diego Supercomputer Center with electronic records from our RMA repository so they can encapsulate the records using XML. We are very excited about this collaboration, because we believe that RMAs are needed to identify collections of electronic records that are candidates for archival preservation.

### **Business Process and Cultural Change Analyses**

The project team hired Tora Bikson of RAND to be our consultant for this project. Tora visited with the project team in June to develop a plan for our business process and cultural change analyses. All of the project participants who work for OSS will be evaluated during the cultural change analysis. In addition, two business processes within OSS were selected for the business process analysis. The first is the budget and rate development process. The second is the collaborative work of the Forms and Publications Team, which is re-engineering the way that forms and publications are produced and stored.

To evaluate their satisfaction with our work, Tora helped us develop a survey that we are distributing to participants after we create their file plans. In addition, Tora visited in September to conduct baseline data collection interviews with 10 of the participants who work on the two business processes. In October, we distributed baseline data collection surveys that Tora helped us develop to all 65 participants. The surveys were completed anonymously, and 48 surveys were returned (73.8% response rate). The information from the surveys was entered into a Microsoft Access database that Tora will help us analyze. Follow-up surveys will be sent to the participants in approximately 6 and 12 months.

## **Reports and Presentations**

The project team is very proactive about sharing information about our pilot project with others inside and outside of Michigan government. We published monthly reports on our web page. We provided progress reports to the Electronic Records Committee and departmental Records Management Officers at their quarterly meetings. In addition, we conducted two demonstrations of ForeMost; one for the Electronic Records Committee and another for Chief Information Officers.

During the vendor selection process we discovered that a county government in Michigan, Allegan County, is already using ForeMost to manage electronic records and images. We are very impressed by their management support for the product, and their success using it. Since the State Archives is responsible for helping local governments manage and preserve their records, we are working with Allegan County to inform other local governments about the benefits of using RMAs to manage electronic records. As a result, we plan to give several presentations about the pilot project in collaboration with Allegan County.

So far, we gave presentations about the pilot project to the Michigan Information Systems Association (MISA) and the Mid-Michigan ARMA chapter. We are scheduled to give presentations during the next year to the Detroit ARMA chapter, at NAGARA's annual meeting, at the annual meeting of the Michigan Archival Association, and the semi-annual meeting of the Midwest Archives Conference. We have applied to give presentations at the annual ARMA meeting, the ARMA Government ISG meeting, SAA's annual meeting, the annual Managing Electronic Records conference, and the annual meetings of several professional organizations for local governments in Michigan.

The Midwest Archives Conference Newsletter published an article by Caryn Wojcik, titled "Technology Solutions for Technology Problems" in the July 2000 issue that discusses why RMAs can help manage electronic records (attached).

## **Enterprise-Wide Implementation**

In the past, when we spoke to information technology professionals and Chief Information Officers (CIOs) about records management they have not shown any interest. When we talk to these people now about the RMA project, they are very curious about it. For example, e-commerce is a very hot topic in Michigan. Governor John Engler created an e-Michigan office to lead this initiative in our state. The e-Michigan office is observing how ForeMost can help

them manage e-commerce transactions. In fact, one of our pilot offices is already conducting e-commerce transactions (internet auctions of surplus property) that will be managed by ForeMost.

In addition, e-mail storage and retention recently became a topic of concern for Governor Engler. He asked George Boersma, Michigan's CIO, to develop a policy to deal with the problem. We met with George Boersma, and the other departmental CIOs at their monthly meeting, and we convinced them that a RMA is the only viable solution to the problem. As a result, the project team was asked to evaluate what resources are needed to implement RMAs enterprise-wide, as well as how quickly this can be accomplished. Fortunately, the CIOs recognize that we are still at the beginning of our pilot, and a lot needs to happen before we are ready to implement the software enterprise-wide. We warned them that while this is a technology solution to a technology problem; it is not possible to throw this technology on a desktop and expect it to work without significant human involvement in activities like file plan development and retention and disposition management.

On November 17 we held a "ribbon cutting" ceremony to officially file the first documents into ForeMost. Janet Phipps, DMB Director, and her two deputies (including George Boersma) attended the ceremony. Their response to seeing and using ForeMost first-hand was very positive. They felt the software was easy and fun to use, and could see how a trained user could quickly become comfortable using and benefiting from it.

## **Conclusion**

The general rule about projects like ours tends to be that people cause problems, not the software. We found the opposite to be the case. Our pilot participants are very curious and receptive to the project, and some are actually eager to use ForeMost. Most of them found the file plan development process to be very educational and beneficial, even though they do not have ForeMost yet. Interest about the project from both inside and outside Michigan government is greater than we expected. Furthermore, we are pleasantly surprised to see the State CIO and many departmental CIOs understand and appreciate that every employee needs a RMA to manage their electronic records in accordance with legal retention requirements.

While we are frustrated and disappointed by the problems we are experiencing with the software, and the fact that our participants are not using it yet; we do not feel that this time was wasted. The project team was very productive with developing file plans, education and marketing plans, project plans and learning how to use the software ourselves. In many ways this first quarter exceeded our expectations.



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JOHN ENGLER, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT & BUDGET

P.O. BOX 30026, LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909

Duane Berger, Director

November 30, 2001

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mark Conrad, National Historical Publications and Records Commission

CC: Sandra Clark, Michigan State Historical Records Advisory Board

FROM: Jim Kinsella, Records and Forms Management Division

SUBJECT: Michigan's Records Management Application Pilot Project  
Grant Number 2000-059

**Progress Report: May 1, 2001 through November 30, 2001**

The State of Michigan Records Management Application Pilot Project aims to assess the ability of a relatively new type of software program, called a Records Management Application, to classify and manage electronic records created using common desktop applications, and to implement retention requirements. An interdisciplinary team selected and installed ForeMost Enterprise, by TrueArc, into a Michigan government agency client-server computer environment. Currently, archivists, records managers, information technology staff and agency personnel are pilot-testing use of the software, and are evaluating its user-friendliness, its practicality, its simplicity, its effectiveness, and its impact upon various participants in the project. The Pilot Project is also assessing the practicality of employing Records Management Applications for the classification and management of electronic public records (including archival records) throughout Michigan's government enterprise; and has begun evaluating the potential for enterprise-wide implementation. The project team includes: Jim Kinsella, Project Director; Doug Case, Records Analyst; Caryn Wojcik, Electronic Records Archivist; Mimi Dionne, Project Archivist; and Deborah Gouin, Project Archivist.

**Project Personnel**

Mimi Dionne accepted a permanent position with the University of Texas at Houston, Health Science Center. Her last day working on the RMA Project was October 19, 2001. We will be evaluating the budget for the RMA Project, and at this point, we hope to extend Deborah Gouin's employment with the project for approximately six additional months. This would not require NHPRC to provide the State of Michigan with additional funding, and it would allow us to continue to evaluate the software, while also supporting our phase I and phase II project participants. In addition, Debbie Gearhart, CRM, FAI, the manager of analyst services within the Records and Forms Management Division, will be assisting with the file plan development

portion of the phase II implementation. We believe that Debbie's expertise will be a great asset to the project team.

### **Project Participants**

The original project plan had proposed that the Director's Office of the Department of Management and Budget (DMB) be used as the test site for phase II of the RMA Project. At the time, this was a sound proposal. However, since then, various personnel changes and government reorganizations have altered this point of view. As a result, in September 2001, the project team proposed that the newly created Department of History, Arts and Libraries (HAL), the parent agency to the State Archives of Michigan, become the test site for phase II of the project. HAL's director accepted this proposal and agreed to sponsor the project, as well as serving as a project participant himself. As a result, approximately 40 people, including the administrative, business and personnel staff, the leadership team, and the staff of the State Archives, will serve as the phase II project participants. Implementation for phase II of the project began in October, and so far the response from the participants has been generally positive. Some participants have asked to join the project, instead of being recruited; and many are already brainstorming ways that the software might improve their business processes.

### **Software Deployment**

After a series of delays TrueArc finally delivered the disks for ForeMost Enterprise 2.1 on May 25. The primary benefit of this new version is that it streamlines the filing of Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint documents. Using this version, the steps involved in filing the documents are all the same, and it is no longer necessary to save the document to a local drive before filing it into ForeMost. Unfortunately, DMB's Information Technology Services Division (ITSD) did not successfully install the upgrade until July 19.

In late June the project participants observed that ForeMost was not performing well in the afternoons (both searching and filing functions were slow). It was determined that the index had been corrupted and needed to be re-built. Rebuilding the index and changing the frequency of its operation did fix that problem. However, a new problem was observed. Since the index was rebuilt, the version control feature has stopped working for non-email documents, using the normal re-filing method. With the assistance of TrueArc, the project team has attempted to identify the source of the problem and correct it, with no success. On August 2 a member of TrueArc's technical support staff visited Lansing to inspect the server and client installations and try to fix the problem. Unfortunately, that visit was ineffective and cost us time and money, because the person TrueArc sent could not fix the problem, and he did not gather enough information to help the other TrueArc staff identify a cause and solution for the problem. On August 22, the project director sent a letter to the President of TrueArc detailing the problem and our concern that it still was not corrected. A conference call on September 12 with TrueArc's Vice President for Professional Services elicited more promises to fix the problem promptly, but it was followed by two months of apparent inactivity and silence by TrueArc. On November 9 TrueArc started to request additional information from the ITSD about our technology environment in an attempt to diagnose the cause of the problem, but it is very frustrating to the project team that it has taken them so long develop a plan for fixing a fundamental problem with

their software that started on June 25. To date, the problem still has not been fixed, and the project team is extremely dissatisfied with the technical and customer support we have received from TrueArc.

In preparation for the deployment of ForeMost to the phase II participants in HAL, the project team gathered information about the technical architecture on the project participants' computers. We identified that most of the new participants have a higher version of GroupWise than the phase I participants. We asked TrueArc in October if this would pose a compatibility problem with the macro that supports the filing of GroupWise e-mail. In November TrueArc responded that they did not know if the macro would work with the higher version of GroupWise, and that their company did not have enough resources to test the macro. Currently, we are trying to get the HAL and DMB information technology staff to install ForeMost on one HAL computer so we can test the GroupWise macro ourselves. If this testing determines that the macro does not work, it is apparent that TrueArc will not have the resources to fix the macro, and as a result, we will not be able to deploy ForeMost to the HAL participants, and therefore we will not be able to conduct phase II of the pilot project. The project team is trying to remain optimistic, and we are continuing to develop file plans for the phase II participants with the hope that we will be able to successfully deploy the software in December or January.

### **Business Process and Cultural Change Analyses**

The project team continued to hold monthly meetings with our SuperUsers to keep them informed about the project's progress, and to gather suggestions for improved user support. They suggested that we offer training about advanced searching techniques to all of the project participants. As a result, the project analysts scheduled small training sessions with groups of 1-5 participants.

The project team began analyzing usage statistics for the RMA software, such as the number of documents each participant had filed. These statistics were updated periodically to identify improvements, and to identify what motivated certain people to use the software. We observed that in a few cases people were motivated by training, site visits by the project analysts, and an increased awareness about the features of the software. However, in most cases people were motivated by peer pressure and business process improvements (BPIs).

In May the project team began focusing its efforts on identifying potential BPIs that could be facilitated using ForeMost. The project analysts analyzed business processes that relied upon regular mail instead of e-mail to transmit information (versus physical objects), on business processes that started electronic, but produced paper as the official record of an activity, and on business processes that were solely electronic. We worked with the participants to map the existing business process, brainstorm ways the process could be improved, and then implement and evaluate the new process. The results of these efforts were impressive. Not only did we increase usage of the RMA software, but we found happy users, as well as time and cost savings. One employee even told her supervisor that she needed additional assignments because ForeMost had saved her so much time. The project team decided that the best way to demonstrate these improvements would be to quantify them. As a result, we analyzed the BPIs in terms of reduced retrieval time, reduced paper consumption, reduced storage space, and

reduced cycle time. Each of these factors was assigned a time measurement and a financial measurement, and the measures were input into a spreadsheet (attached).

Admittedly, there are still many project participants who are not using the ForeMost software as their official recordkeeping system, and who have not incorporated it into their daily routines. In some cases, these people do not produce electronic records that are good candidates for the software. In other cases, there are cultural issues that cause the resistance. In July, our consultant Tora Bikson from RAND returned to interview a sampling of the participants. In her report she stated that our focus on potential business process improvements is effective, that we need to stress the necessity of records management for electronic records, that despite repeated instruction, users still do not believe they understand what a record is and what they are responsible for filing, that we should promote peer pressure as a tool to get more people to file their records, and that the users think the training and personal attention has been great.

### **Testing RMA Features**

The RMA feature that received the greatest attention from the project team during this period is the disposition process. In addition to developing procedures, we needed to learn how to conduct disposition using the software. It took us a while to learn how to run reports about the documents that are eligible for destruction, and then we had to test the process to see if it would work.

The project team modeled the electronic records disposition process upon that which is used for paper records. In Michigan, the State Records Center provides off-site storage for state government records. Software called Versatile Enterprise controls the retention and disposition of boxes that are stored at the Records Center. On a quarterly basis, disposal notices are generated from Versatile to notify creating agencies about which of their boxes are eligible for disposal (destruction or transfer to the State Archives). The project team decided that we wanted to generate similar quarterly disposition reports from ForeMost to identify which electronic documents are eligible for disposal. However, several issues had to be addressed before the project team could receive authorization to dispose of any electronic documents.

ForeMost employs two types of retention periods, chronological and conditional. All retention is implemented at the file level, not the document level. A chronological retention period will qualify a document for disposal based upon the date it is filed into the ForeMost repository, plus a specified number of days, months or years. Chronological retention periods are relatively simple to implement. On the other hand, a conditional retention period will retain all documents in a file until a specific event occurs (a contract expires, an employee leaves, a project ends, etc.), and then will qualify all documents in that file for disposal a specified number of days, months or years after that event occurs. Unfortunately, the records administrator who runs the disposition report rarely knows when these events occur. Someone must notify the records administrator about these events; so the project team established a procedure for requesting this notification.

We designated disposition coordinators from each of the participating offices who agreed to be responsible for the review and approval of the disposition reports. We informed the coordinators that they would receive their conditional disposition reports on an annual basis. The conditional

disposition reports will only identify those files (not documents) within their office's file plan that are still open (event has not occurred yet). The coordinators will receive 30 days to review the report and identify any files that should be closed. The coordinators will receive their chronological disposition reports on a quarterly basis. These reports will list each document that is eligible for disposal, the file in which the document is stored, and the name of the person who filed the document. Again, coordinators will have 30 days to review the report and approve the disposal of the documents. Coordinators will also have the option to identify specific chronological files in their file plan for which they do not want to review disposition reports, and therefore authorize the disposal of the documents within those files without reviewing them on quarterly reports. The first chronological and conditional disposition reports were distributed to the coordinators in September 2001. In October, the project team successfully disposed of almost 11,000 electronic documents that were authorized for destruction on the first disposal notices. We filed reports containing metadata for the disposed documents in ForeMost to document their destruction.

The project team also asked the coordinators to review their file plan to identify any files that are currently identified as having a conditional retention period which could be converted to a chronological retention period (this may require a modification to the agency's Retention and Disposal Schedule). The Records and Forms Management Division evaluated its file plan in September 2001, and determined that most of its files with conditional retention periods could be converted.

### **Creating a Digital Archive**

Caryn Wojcik worked with computer scientists at the San Diego Supercomputer Center (SDSC) to develop a two-year grant proposal to develop and test a model for preserving electronic records that are stored in a RMA repository. The proposal was submitted to NHPRC on June 1. On June 20, Reagan Moore, of the San Diego Supercomputer Center, and Tim Shinkle, CTO of TrueArc, visited Lansing and met with the project team to discuss the new project. The meeting was generally an orientation about existing projects, and an overview of the goals of the new project. After the meeting Reagan spoke to a group of information technology professionals employed by the State of Michigan about SDSC's initiatives to use XML as a preservation tool. In November we were notified that the new grant proposal received full-funding and unanimous support from NHPRC. The project will start in July 2002, and we are very excited.

### **Enterprise-Wide Implementation**

In January, the Governor announced during his State of the State address that he would be creating a new department of History, Arts and Culture (later renamed History, Arts and Libraries), which would include the State Archives. The Department of History, Arts and Libraries (HAL) went into effect on August 6. In addition, the Governor issued an Executive Order creating a new Department of Information Technology (DOIT) to centralize all IT administrative and technical support functions in August. As a result of this order, the DMB no longer has responsibility for shaping and issuing IT policy and standards. DOIT should provide our electronic records initiatives with new opportunities to address record retention and

preservation issues, but it also means that we need to formulate a new strategy for approaching the IT community. The order took effect in October 2001.

These reorganizations prompted the project team to approach the Director of HAL, to ask if he would support using HAL's executive staff as the test site for phase II of the pilot project. We believe that it is important for the phase II installation to take place in an office environment that is administratively and functionally different from the phase I installation, and that it should demonstrate the capabilities of RMA software in an executive office setting. We explained to the Director that we wanted to conduct phase II in an office environment where RMA use would receive strong support from the top/down. As we previously mentioned, he agreed to support phase II of the project, and the implementation of ForeMost within HAL began in October 2001. This will provide the project team with several months to compare and analyze the two phases of the project before the NHPRC grant concludes. In addition, the information gathered during phase II will influence the business case for enterprise-wide use of RMA software that the project team is developing.

## **Presentations**

The project team continues to actively share information about the project with our colleagues. We continue to post monthly reports on the project web page, which receives an average of 72 unique visitors each month.

Presentations and demonstrations about the project were given to the following audiences: Midwest Archives Conference spring meeting, Michigan Association of County Administrative Officers annual meeting, Michigan Archival Association annual meeting, National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators annual meeting, Association of Records Managers and Administrators, International annual meeting, Michigan Association of Government Computer Users annual meeting, Wayne State University's SAA Student Chapter, and the e-Records Solutions Conference.

## **Conclusion**

During this period of time the project team focused on adapting to various reorganizations within Michigan government, and identifying and measuring potential business process improvements. The full impact of the various reorganizations is still not known at this point, and we anticipate that significant changes will take place in the near future that will affect both the project participants and the project team.

The project team spent a considerable amount of time demonstrating how easy the RMA software was to use, and reducing participant filing activities to a few keystrokes; but the reality of the workplace is that no matter how important and beneficial good records management may be, participants are intolerant of anything that consumes their time and thought. This is why the project team's emphasis on BPIs has been so crucial for encouraging use of the software. It is our hope that the new cultural/administrative environment of the phase II participants will teach us more about techniques for addressing cultural change, while encouraging good records management.

STATE OF MICHIGAN



JOHN ENGLER, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT & BUDGET

P.O. BOX 30026, LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909

Duane Berger, Acting Director

May 31, 2001

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mark Conrad, National Historical Publications and Records Commission

CC: Sandra Clark, Michigan State Historical Records Advisory Board

FROM: Jim Kinsella, Records and Forms Management Division

SUBJECT: Michigan's Records Management Application Pilot Project  
Grant Number 2000-059

**Progress Report: November 1, 2000 through April 30, 2001**

The State of Michigan Records Management Application Pilot Project aims to assess the ability of a relatively new type of software program, called a Records Management Application, to classify and manage electronic records created using common desktop applications, and to implement retention requirements. An interdisciplinary team selected and installed ForeMost Enterprise 2.0, by Provenance Systems, Inc. (now TrueArc), into a Michigan government agency client-server computer environment. Currently, archivists, records managers, information technology staff and agency personnel are pilot-testing use of the software, and are evaluating its user-friendliness, its practicality, its simplicity, its effectiveness, and its impact upon various participants in the project. The Pilot Project is also assessing the practicality of employing Records Management Applications for the classification and management of electronic public records (including archival records) throughout Michigan's government enterprise; and has begun evaluating the potential for enterprise-wide implementation. The project team includes: Jim Kinsella, Project Director; Doug Case, Records Analyst; Caryn Wojcik, Electronic Records Archivist; Mimi Dionne, Project Archivist; and Deborah Gouin, Project Archivist.

**Software Installation and Deployment**

On November 27 Provenance delivered a patch to fix the problems we were experiencing with the ForeMost integration with our e-mail software, GroupWise. The project team then evaluated our installation of ForeMost and determined that it was operating at a satisfactory level to go ahead with the deployment of the software. However, we continued to have concerns that some of the functionality of the software needed to improve for widespread deployment to be successful. We shared these concerns with Provenance and they informed us that they would fix most of the functional problems when a service pack was released in January 2001. However, as January approached the deployment of this service pack was delayed to the end of the first quarter of 2001. Yet again, this deployment date was missed. On April 30 Provenance finally

informed us that ForeMost Enterprise version 2.1 would be released instead of a service pack, and that the new version was in the mail. The new version has not arrived yet, so we do not know if our concerns were addressed. The functional issues we asked Provenance to address were the following:

- Procedures for filing new documents into ForeMost from MS Word, Excel and PowerPoint should be the same, so there is only one set of instructions.
- Users should not be required to save an electronic document locally before filing it into ForeMost. If documents must be saved locally first, then users are essentially saving the document twice. This is double the number of necessary steps and a recordkeeping liability.
- The subject field should be auto-populated in the document profile screen when users file an existing document into ForeMost Explorer from Windows Explorer, so they do not need to supply a file name/subject twice.
- ForeMost should automatically delete the local copy of a document after it is filed into the repository (records administrator should be able to activate a dialog box that asks the user if they want their local copy deleted, before the delete function is performed).
- Users should be able to charge-out and charge-in electronic documents (to prevent simultaneous editing of an electronic document by multiple users).

Once we confirmed that ForeMost was working properly on the computers of the project team and in the computer lab we were using for training, we authorized the Information Technology Services Division (ITSD) to deploy the software to the first group of users we wanted to train. At this time, we determined that each user's computer must be configured in multiple ways after the deployment for ForeMost to work. Mimi and Deborah would be responsible for this configuration work, and ITSD gave them instructions. We quickly learned that this was a bad idea.

The first deployment to approximately 30 users experienced several configuration problems. ITSD tried to resolve these problems, but it took a considerable amount of time to identify the cause of each problem and the appropriate solution. As a result, we had several frustrated users, IT staff and project staff. A meeting between the project team and ITSD was held in early January 2001 to try to prevent these problems with the second deployment to an additional 20 users. At this time, we believed that all of the configuration issues were identified and resolved. However, the second deployment was also problematic, and our users were blaming Mimi and Deborah for problems beyond their control and expertise. At this point, everyone was extremely frustrated and determined that this could not happen again. Another meeting with ITSD was held in late January to find a solution. This time ITSD decided to have its technicians configure the computers after software deployment (scheduling issues for deployment and configuration were also resolved). This time we learned our lesson, and the third deployment in February to approximately 10 users went quite smoothly. Finally, all 60 users had ForeMost working on their computers.

In addition, we decided during this phase that it would be best to have one person on the project team act as our liaison with Provenance, and to have another person act as our liaison with ITSD. This way, it would be easier to resolve technical and software problems. Caryn Wojcik was



assigned to be the Provenance liaison, and Deborah Gouin was assigned to be the ITSD liaison. Note: On May 1, 2001 Provenance announced that it was changing its name to TrueArc.

## **Training and Follow-up**

In early November Mimi and Deborah began practicing their delivery of the training. Our goal for the introductory training was to give each user enough information to start using the software, without overwhelming them. We understood that people only retain a portion of what they are taught in a classroom setting, so we wanted to keep the class short (2 hours), and teach them the basics (filing, searching and retrieving documents). We decided that we could rely upon follow-up site visits and training guides to teach the more advanced features of the product to our users.

On November 30 through December 1 Mimi and Deborah trained approximately 30 users from the Records and Forms Management Division, the Office of Support Services Administration and Business Services, and the Consolidated Print Center. On January 9-10 they trained approximately 20 users from Mail and Delivery/Materials Management Services, and on February 9 and 12 approximately 10 users from Print and Graphics Services attended introductory training.

All of the introductory training classes were preceded by work to develop file plans for each office, and update their Retention and Disposal Schedules. After training, Mimi and Deborah visited all of the users to help them file, search for and retrieve a few documents from their own computer. On a daily basis, both of them are visiting the 60 users to resolve questions, and help the users maximize their use of the software. In addition, they both have pagers that keep them accessible to users when they are not physically at the user's work site.

In April the project team created a special file in the RMA repository for storing training guides. All project participants have access to this file so they can reference information about using ForeMost.

## **Testing RMA Features**

After ForeMost was installed and deployed to the users, the project team began exploring the various features of the software. We started to explore the reporting and auditing features and the disposition process. On January 23-24 the project team attended additional training from Provenance about designing and running reports and implementing disposition. We determined that we needed to buy Crystal Reports software to allow us to run the types of reports we want about software usage. Unfortunately, we could not find a computer class on using Crystal Reports, so we asked other state employees familiar with the software to help us use it. Doug Case led our efforts to design and run reports from ForeMost. We also determined that we needed written disposition procedures and a disposition liaison in each office. Each of the five office directors were appointed as a disposition liaison, and the project team is writing disposition procedures that we will start testing in June.

## **Business Process and Cultural Change Analyses**

In February our consultant, Tora Bikson, submitted qualitative and quantitative reports analyzing baseline data that was collected about the project participants before they received ForeMost. This data was collected using a survey and several interviews, and they will be repeated this summer to evaluate the progress of the project. These reports reveal a lot of interesting information about our project participants. For example, “Regardless of Division membership or type of job, interviewees consensually view top management as promoting and encouraging innovative uses of new information technologies to improve DMB's business processes. . . . On the other hand, a number of respondents suggested that DMB is regarded as a controlling and change-resistant culture.” Another interesting finding was that “the degree of customization required for ForeMost installation would be treated as a predictor of implementation ease.” These statements and others found in the reports have helped the project team design our approach to the project participants.

When the project was first conceived the project team intended to conduct formal business process analyses of two business processes. However, what we found through focus group meetings with the participants (described below), is that people will not use RMA software (no matter how simple or beneficial it may be to use), until they see a benefit. Of course, they will not see any benefits until they use it themselves. Fortunately, when Mimi and Deborah were developing the file plans for the participants they mapped the various business processes and tasks that were associated with record creation. We are now using this information and site visits with the users to identify tasks that can take advantage of ForeMost to generate business process improvements (BPIs), both big and small. We are using several approaches for finding potential BPIs. For example, we are looking at tasks that originate electronically, but are documented with paper. We are also looking at tasks that involve multiple people who need access to the same documents. Through this approach we want to identify many BPIs that were either made possible using ForeMost, or that were inspired by ForeMost usage. We also intend to evaluate these BPIs to measure how they saved time and money, and improved quality and efficiency.

In March and April the project team held focus group meetings with each of the pilot offices. At these meetings we informally surveyed the participants to assess if they were using ForeMost (compared to the usage statistics that the software generates), and what their attitudes about the software and the implementation were. We confirmed that only a small percentage of the participants are actually using the software independently, and that even fewer incorporated the use of ForeMost into all of their daily work routines. However, those who have, claim that they no longer notice the steps involved in using ForeMost, they simply use it. At each meeting we tried to identify at least one potential BPI, in the hopes that showing one improvement to each group might foster more use of the software. We also asked each group designate one member to be its “SuperUser.” SuperUsers will be liaisons between their office and the project team. In April the SuperUsers attended advanced ForeMost training, and we scheduled monthly meetings for them to share information about their successes and concerns.

One of the concerns of the project team, is that we are spending a lot of time helping our users find and implement BPIs that involve ForeMost. While this may be essential for a pilot project, it is not practical for enterprise-wide implementation. Therefore, the project team is trying to identify BPIs that are not unique to specific business functions, and other mechanisms that will help future RMA users identify functional BPIs themselves.

## **Enterprise-Wide Implementation**

Both the Michigan Gaming Control Board and the Michigan Department of Transportation are preparing to implement RMAs (iRims) to help manage their electronic records. While they are not using ForeMost, we are very pleased that they recognize the value of RMAs as a tool that can improve records management for their agencies, as well as business processes. Both agencies asked the project team to assist them with their implementation, which will allow us to evaluate a second RMA product.

In December Jim Kinsella submitted a standard proposal request to the Enterprise Standards Review Team that develops and recommends new technical standards to the CIO Impact Committee. The request was approved, but a standards development team has not been assembled to write the standard. The standard will be functional and not product-specific.

In April the project team met with Sandra Clark, Joyce VanCoevering, Debbie Gearhart and Dave Johnson to discuss our vision for the project as a whole, and where the team's vision intersects with our target audiences' vision. We also discussed what activities were essential during the next year if the project is to be viewed successful by both the team and our target audiences. The consensus was that this was a useful exercise for mapping and ranking activities for the second year of the project. As a result of this meeting, during the next year, the project team will be writing a strategic plan that we can submit to our management that will outline the resources that are needed for enterprise-wide implementation, and the best approach for reaching this goal.

Two personnel changes affected the progress of the RMA project. In December, Sandy Friedle left her position as director of the Office of Support Services. Sandy was the primary sponsor of this project, and while her interim replacement, Joyce VanCoevering, was involved with the project since the software selection stage, she is not convinced yet of the business uses of ForeMost. In February, Janet Phipps left her position as director of the Department of Management and Budget (DMB). Janet had agreed to use her office as the test site for phase II of the project. The DMB Acting Director, Duane Berger, wants to see quantitative measures of our success during phase I of the project before beginning phase II. As a result, the project team is developing a justification for implementation of phase II. Our success with this expansion to phase II of the pilot project will be a strong indicator for whether RMA software can be installed and implemented enterprise-wide.

## **Creating a Digital Archive**

In early March Caryn Wojcik attended the advisory board meeting for the NHPRC-funded project at the San Diego Supercomputer Center (SDSC). In addition to demonstrating ForeMost at the meeting, Caryn met with several computer scientists at SDSC to discuss collaboration on a new NHPRC grant project. This project would allow the State of Michigan to supply SDSC with electronic records that are stored in the RMA's repository so a preservation model could be designed for them. Caryn is working with SDSC to write the grant proposal that will be submitted by June 1.

In addition, Mimi, Deborah and Caryn began designing accessioning procedures that the State Archives of Michigan will test for taking legal custody of the archival electronic records that are stored in the RMA.

## **Reports and Presentations**

The project team is very proactive about sharing information about our pilot project with others inside and outside of Michigan government. We continue to publish monthly reports on our web page (<http://www.state.mi.us/dmb/mgmtserv/oss/rfmd/rma/>), along with information about our implementation process and our business process analyses. We also provided progress reports to the Electronic Records Committee and departmental Records Management Officers at their quarterly meetings.

During this reporting period, Jim Kinsella (accompanied by various project team members and Rob Sarro of Allegan County) gave presentations about the pilot project to the Detroit ARMA chapter, the Mid-Michigan ARMA chapter, ARMA Government ISG meeting, the semi-annual meeting of the Midwest Archives Conference, a Michigan Historical Commission monthly meeting, and the annual meeting of the Michigan City Managers Association. We also held an “open house” on February 15 to commemorate the State Office Building fire that convinced the State of Michigan to create a records management program. At the open house we demonstrated ForeMost as a way of showing how it is a tool for preventing future devastation to public records.

To facilitate these presentations we purchased a laptop that is configured to be a standalone ForeMost client and server. We placed a sample file plan into its RMA repository for demonstration purposes, and while the demonstration version does not work exactly the same way as our “live” system, it does help our audience understand how the product works.

In April six people from the Ohio Historical Society and Ohio state government visited Lansing to see our installation of ForeMost and discuss our pilot project. If they decide to purchase ForeMost we offered to allow their staff to visit Lansing for a week to observe and learn from our implementation process.

## **Conclusion**

In March the project team discussed the lessons we learned so far, and how we might have altered the implementation of ForeMost if we could go back in time, knowing what we know now. For example, we would have:

- given the project team more time to learn the software ourselves before we shipped it to others;
- provided real demonstrations of the software to the users before we began designing their file plans;
- identified specific business processes that might be improved with the help of ForeMost before we trained users how to use the software, so we could focus their use on those processes first (believing that once they see the benefit to one process, they will use it for others);

- asked the agency directors to designate a SuperUser at the beginning of the project, and we would have trained the SuperUsers first; and
- written disposition procedures tested and in place before records were filed into the repository by users.

Overall, we are quite pleased with the progress of the project and what we have learned. We are still very confident in the project's ability to successfully fulfill its goals.

STATE OF MICHIGAN



JOHN ENGLER, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT & BUDGET

P.O. BOX 30026, LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909

Duane Berger, Director

May 31, 2002

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Mark Conrad, National Historical Publications and Records Commission

CC: Sandra Clark, Michigan State Historical Records Advisory Board

FROM: Jim Kinsella, Records Management

SUBJECT: Michigan's Records Management Application Pilot Project  
Grant Number 2000-059

**Progress Report: December 1, 2001 through May 31, 2001**

The State of Michigan Records Management Application Pilot Project aims to assess the ability of a relatively new type of software program, called a Records Management Application, to classify and manage electronic records created using common desktop applications, and to implement retention requirements. An interdisciplinary team selected and installed ForeMost Enterprise, by TrueArc, into a Michigan government agency client-server computer environment. Currently, archivists, records managers, information technology staff and agency personnel are pilot-testing use of the software, and are evaluating its user-friendliness, its practicality, its simplicity, its effectiveness, and its impact upon various participants in the project. The Pilot Project is also assessing the practicality of employing Records Management Applications for the classification and management of electronic public records (including archival records) throughout Michigan's government enterprise; and has begun evaluating the potential for enterprise-wide implementation. The project team includes: Jim Kinsella, Project Director; Doug Case, Records Analyst; Caryn Wojcik, Electronic Records Archivist; and Deborah Gouin, Project Archivist.

**Phase I**

Phase I users were notified in January that they had fulfilled their one-year commitment to use the ForeMost software. They were provided with the option of continuing to use the software or have it removed from their computers. This offer was extended during a major reorganization of the Department of Management and Budget (DMB). This reorganization had a significant impact upon the phase I agencies, both in structure and in leadership. Most of the Phase I users, despite a lack of enthusiasm for the product, did not respond to the offer to have ForeMost removed. Some of the new agency directors did request additional information about ForeMost, and then agreed to continue using the software within their agency, even though they were not

obligated to do so. The project team continues to provide support to the phase I users, but our emphasis has shifted to the phase II group.

## **Phase II**

All members of the project team participated in developing file plans for the phase II users within the Department of History, Arts and Libraries (HAL). This included inventories of existing filing systems, discussions about how ForeMost would be used to manage records, reviews of draft file plans, and input of finalized file plans into ForeMost. This work continued through February. Overall, the phase II users are very cooperative and supportive of the project, though they continue to have reasonable questions about how the software will affect them.

The project team anticipated, based upon our experiences with phase I, that deployment of the ForeMost software within the phase II environment would be problematic. We attempted to prevent this from delaying implementation of phase II, but were largely unsuccessful, due to circumstances beyond our control. The simultaneous formation of HAL and the Department of Information Technology (DIT) put an enormous strain upon the IT staff resources assigned to the project. At the same time we were trying to deploy ForeMost, the HAL IT staff were working on several other priority projects, including a large network and operating system conversion. These conversions also impacted upon the ability of the phase II users to access the ForeMost software on the server (which is maintained by DMB's Information Technology Services Division--ITSD). As a result, it took several months to resolve these issues and successfully install the software. Meanwhile, the RMA Team updated all training materials and prepared to train the phase II users once the software was deployed.

As of this report, 19 phase II users have received the ForeMost software, including the HAL Executive Office, the Michigan Historical Center and the State Archives of Michigan. Eleven of these users have been trained to use the software, and the rest have been scheduled for training. The remaining 17 phase II users are expected to receive the software and training in June and July. We are pleased to report that the Michigan Historical Center staff is making a conscious effort to learn and use ForeMost so they can serve as model users. Their support of the software is pivotal to the success of the project, because they can influence other phase II users both above and below them within the organization chart.

## **Software Issues**

Resolving the version control problem occupied a significant amount of staff and vendor time. Initially, TrueArc could not replicate or determine the cause of the problem. We attempted to re-install the search server, and we ran several tests. Finally, we determined that the macros that control the document naming functionality had been corrupted. We never determined what caused the corruption of the macro, and TrueArc never supplied a patch to repair the macro, but on February 22 the version control feature started working again. Documents filed during the ten-month period when the feature was not working are still corrupt (meaning that version control must be applied using different steps), but all newly-filed documents are fine. Fortunately, none of the phase II users filed documents before February 22, so they are not affected by this problem.

On January 23 ITSD installed ForeMost Enterprise 2.5. This version of the software includes several features that our project team suggested TrueArc improve. We are pleased with these improvements, because they make the software more user-friendly, however we are still hoping that other suggestions we have submitted will be included in future releases.

On January 28 ITSD upgraded the ForeMost server, and this caused the search function to stop working. We spent a very frustrating week trying to fix the problem so our users could access their documents stored in the repository. ITSD re-installed the software on February 5 and this finally fixed the problem. The project team had no control over this situation, which caused several phase I users to lose faith in the software, however, we are trying to better prevent and remedy these problems in the future. Unfortunately, a similar problem occurred when the computers switched to daylight savings time, but the problem was fixed within a few hours.

### **Business Process and Cultural Change Analyses**

In January the project team worked with our consultant, Tora Bikson, to develop our final survey of the phase I participants. The anonymous survey was distributed, and 26 of the 70 users responded to the survey. In February, the survey data was input into a database and sent to Tora Bikson for analysis, but we have not received her report yet. The response rate to the survey was disappointingly low, and an informal observation of the responses showed more negative comments than positive. However, the negative respondents also admitted that they never even tried to use the software. Hopefully, Ms. Bikson's report will identify the reasons why these people never used the software.

### **Creating a Digital Archive**

Caryn Wojcik and Deborah Gouin developed a plan for testing archival accessioning of documents in the ForeMost repository. We have created a sample file plan and we have filed some transitory documents into it. We gave the files a 1-day retention period with authorization to transfer the documents to the State Archives. We have asked TrueArc to help us run a disposition/migration on the documents in June. We will attempt to formally transfer and accession the documents to an "Electronic Records Repository." Among the issues the plan will attempt to address are: how the disposition/migration works, how to formally document the accessioning process, if we can maintain the documents in the repository so they are organized in a file plan that mirrors the active system, if we can establish an electronic finding aid to assist researchers with identifying the documents they want, and if we can establish security and access controls for the researchers.

In July Caryn Wojcik and Jim Kinsella will begin working with the researchers at the San Diego Supercomputer Center, and the project team for our second NHPRC grant project, to further investigate preservation functionality. We recognize that the archival accessioning procedures we will be testing in June may be further modified by the lessons learned during the second project.



## **Outreach**

The project team continues to actively share information about the project with our colleagues. We continue to post monthly reports on the project web page, which received an average of 33 unique visitors each month.

On December 14 the project team met with our colleagues from Allegan County, Michigan to compare the progress of our RMA projects and to discuss the ForeMost software. On December 18 the project team updated the Michigan Government Electronic Records Committee about the progress of our project. On April 29 Deborah Gouin demonstrated ForeMost for a professor from Lansing Community College.

## **Conclusion**

Despite challenges beyond our control, such as reorganizations and technology problems, the project team has remained diligent. We are pleased with the phase II user response to ForeMost, as well as their patience with the technology. However, we will need time to observe and assist the phase II users to know if the implementation has been successful.

We are slowly resolving technical problems within our own IT environment and with the ForeMost software. The project team is continuing to monitor the RMA product market, and we attended two demonstrations of the Microsoft SharePoint/ForeMost integrated document management software in May.

The project team still believes that RMA software is the only tool currently available to manage the retention of electronic records created by desktop applications, especially e-mail. However, we are increasingly concerned that the software has not matured yet to a point where it is friendly enough (invisible) for practical daily use across an entire enterprise. We are looking forward to the remaining six months of the project when we will test our capacity to accession archival records, and as we monitor the progress of the phase II implementation so we can build a business case of increased RMA use within Michigan government.